Capitali$m Kills

Profit and greed rob our children of their future.

FACT:
More than 2,500 American babies are born into poverty every day.

FACT:
40 million people are partially or totally jobless, hungry or homeless.

FACT:
One out of four children goes to bed hungry.

Capitalism kills.

It kills because it is a society that is built on and breeds greed and cruelty – that puts profits before people. It is a system in which a very small, very rich ruling class of capitalists – who own and run everything – gets its obscene wealth from using and abusing people.

In this richest country in the world, it should be possible for our society to guarantee that all children are provided the necessities to live a healthy, productive, secure life in a safe environment.

It should be possible – it is possible – but just the opposite is the reality in the U.S. today.

by Gus Hall
National Chair, Communist Party USA

In a recent study by an international research group that compared 18 industrialized nations, the U.S. had the highest child poverty rate. Poor children here fare much worse than poor children in countries like Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Belgium and Norway where children have standards of living 50 percent higher than poor children in the United States.

The study also looked at how governments spend their money – what their priorities and values are. It found that the U.S. ranks first in military spending, technology and productivity. It also stands first in the number of millionaires and billionaires.

While the gap between rich and poor children is the largest among industrialized nations, the U.S. ranks last in infant mortality and 16th in living standards among the poorest children.The study found that America's youngest children continue to be the poorest. One in four live in poverty. Almost half of African American children and two-fifths of Latino children live in poverty. Of course, despite the disproportionate childhood poverty among minorities, the majority of poor children in the U.S. are white.

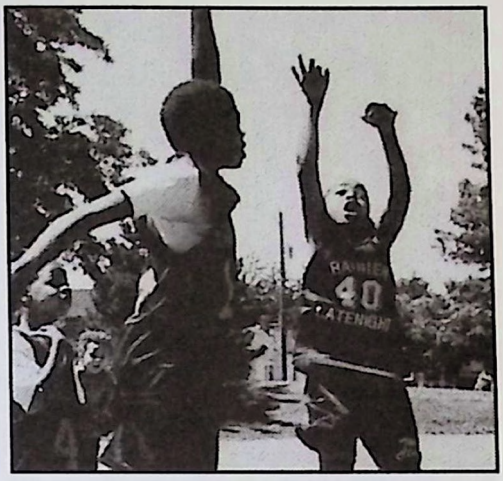
Contrary to stereotypes, the majority of poor parents work. But with the wages of full-time workers dropping 20 percent since 1979, families with children are no better off than they were 20 years ago.

Parents are not to blame

Thus, the standard of living and quality of life in our country are deteriorating rapidly. No longer can parents expect that their children will do better than they did, that the next generation will live better than the one before. Why do so many of our children live such miserable lives and grow up with so little hope? It is certainly not the fault of the parents. In the great majority of cases where you find child abuse and neglect, you will also find poverty and despair, which breed anger, frustration and violence.

While we get a daily media menu of horror stories about abuse, we rarely get the story of poverty, shame and pain that drives people to do

terrible things. And we never get to the real, underlying cause of what is called "bad parenting," "dysfunctional families," and "lack of family values."



Capitalism is to blame

Capitalism is the enemy of every child in the USA. Children (and their parents) are victims of the violence of capitalism. It is an inherently evil system that is capable of driving poverty-ridden, stressed-out, frightened parents to drink, take drugs – even to do unthinkable things to themselves and their children.

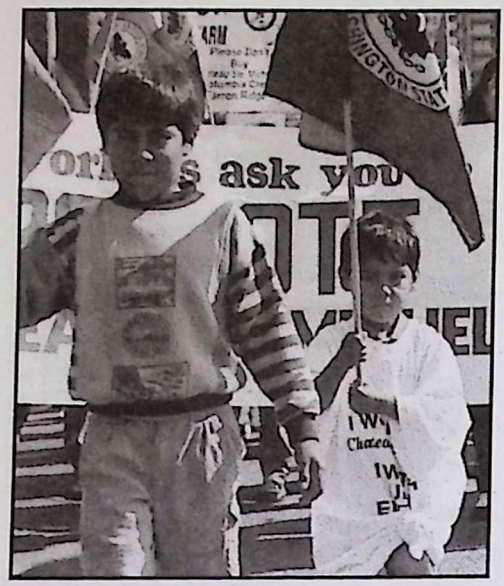
The facts of life in the U.S. today tell the story:

Forty million people are partially or totally jobless, hungry or homeless. More than 2,500 American babies are born into poverty every day. Every 15 minutes a child dies. One out of four children goes to bed hungry. Malnutrition and infant mortality and childhood disease are on the rise. Basic, life-saving services for children are being slashed and eliminated. Programs such as Medicaid, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, child care, school and summer lunch programs and education are all on the chopping block of the Republicans' "Contract on America" – and this while the government keeps shoveling wasted billions down the sinkhole of job-stealing military budgets.

Welfare is being gutted and the Wisconsin plan is held up as a model for the states to throw families off welfare – while billions are spent on corporate welfare. Joblessness is causing families to lose their homes, their cars, their farms, their personal possessions and increasingly even their lives.

'Contract on America' to blame

Why all this misery in the richest country in the world? Because ours is a nation run by a handful of ruthless rulers and their mega-monopolies whose credo is "greed is good." People are being thrown out of work, into the streets, shelters and souplines by the hundreds of thousands because the capitalist system wants higher profits.



Corporate America and its bought-and-paid-for politicians, the GOP first-term "Gang of 73" in Congress, have decided to put over the most vicious anti-working class, anti-people, anti-children racist policies in its history. With their "Contract on America," they are attempting to dismantle every entitlement program, to cut the safety net out from under every working class and poor family in the United States.

Once again, why? It is not because there is no money. It is not because the government can't afford to sustain, and even increase, these programs. It is certainly not to balance the budget or reduce the national debt.

It is pure and simple greed. The filthy rich want to get richer by making the poor poorer. They want to put all the costs of the crises they create onto the backs of the working people.

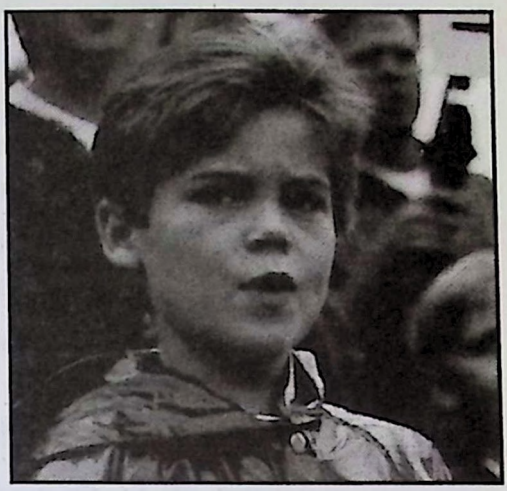
They are attempting to take back the entitlements won in fierce class battles over the last 60 years. The "Contract on America" would undo all the gains and more. It is based on a fascist-type ideology, designed by a fascist-type mentality, introduced and pushed by the most extreme right-wing Republicans in Congress.

Corporate America, and its flunkies who dominate Congress, spend billions on propaganda to hoodwink the people into believing that government is "too big, too intrusive, too bureaucratic and too much in debt."

Their answer? Turn all the social programs over to the states. It's back to the old "states' rights" trick. That is the same as pronouncing a death sentence on every federally-funded program. And that is pronouncing a death sentence on families who depend on them to keep their children fed and clothed.

The "Contract on America" cuts already in effect are condemning a million more children each year to lives of poverty and despair. If the right-wing Republicans maintain their choke-hold on Congress the number of children falling into poverty every year will jump into the multi-millions.

Corporate criminals kill for profit



And yet, the Gingrich gang in Congress argues that raising the minimum wage from $4.25 to $5.15 will force employers to lay off low-paid workers. Hogwash! The corporate killers have been laying off millions right along, and will continue whether the sub-human minimum is raised or not.

Children don't matter one bit to the corporate monsters who get $2.5 million for revving up productivity with speedup and forced overtime, lay off thousands, close plants, destroy cities and towns – and with them the families who live there.

Corporate America has no "social conscience," no sense of social responsibility – except to their class.

Their only loyalty is to profits. Their only patriotism is to their corporate logos.

Their families, who get the very best of everything to pass from generation to generation, never have to pick up a tool. Their lives of leisure are made possible and profitable with the sweat, blood and tears of generations of workers and their children.

Corporate crimes and neglect are responsible for the terrible conditions and poisonous environment our children are forced to endure. What is still public and affordable is falling apart, being downsized and privatized. Our schools have become holding pens of miseducation and no education. The "free" school lunches are often unfit for human consumption. Our hospitals have become institutions of neglect, abuse, suffering and death.

Racism and national oppression, resegregation, attacks on affirmative action and civil rights, racist violence, police brutality, criminalization, racial injustice, militia and hate group terrorism and anti-Semitism are once again widespread in our country. It is nearly impossible to raise healthy, happy children in such a sick capitalist society.

Too many are concerned about the rights of the unborn, but do nothing to improve the living conditions or protect the rights of children already in the world whose lives are being systematically destroyed.

Protect our children – now.

To undo the damage and protect our children we need immediate measures to:

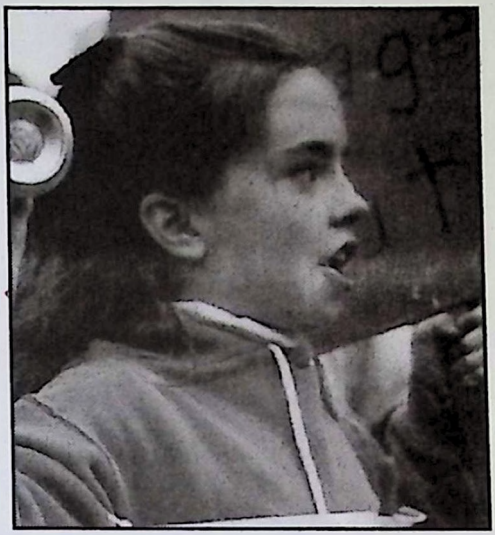
- Enforce and strengthen child labor and protective laws already on the books.
- Save, rebuild and expand the public education system.
- Provide federally subsidized child care.
- Defeat the attempts to destroy welfare, Medicaid, Medicare and all programs for poor children and their families.
- Increase the minimum wage and enact the Martinez and Dellums jobs bills.
- Provide health insurance under a single-payer system.
- Protect women's right to abortion.
- Provide adequate prenatal, post-natal and child care.

Where will the money come from?

To begin with we could:

- Cancel the national debt. The robber banks, insurance and finance companies have already stolen enough from taxpayers in interest alone.
- Pass a law prohibiting executive salaries in the millions of dollars.
- Tax the rich and the corporations and eliminate corporate welfare.
- Eliminate all taxes on working and poor people.
- Cut billions from the bloated military budget.

Socialism made in the USA



To win the pro-children program spelled out on the previous page, we first have to defeat the ultra-right Republicans and their Contract by shifting the balance of power in Congress.

Then we have to put up a fight for a bigger share of the American pie.The profits-pie keeps getting bigger. But the workers keep getting a smaller and smaller piece of it. As a matter of fact, the people should have the whole pie. Why not? We make it.

Ultimately, to save and protect our children – and make life better for every American family – we will have to replace our old, broken-down capitalist system with a socialist system. Socialism is not only a good alternative, it is inevitable because capitalism is a dying system.

Socialism means...

Socialism means "workers shall inherit the earth" and share in all its milk and honey. Socialism eliminates the class that owns the private, for-profit-only corporations. Profits under socialism will go to pay wages and benefits – to meet the needs and desires of all the people. If there is a privileged and pampered "class" it will be the children.

The large industries and resources and natural wealth will be transferred to all the people for enjoyment, use and benefit. Under socialism all the necessities and prerequisites of "the good life" will be available to all with everyone guaranteed a job with decent wages and working conditions. Medical and dental work, child care and education will be free.

Socialism will outlaw racism, all forms of bigotry, prejudice and anti-Semitism. Acts of racism will be punished by the law.

Our socialism – American socialism – will be unique, "made in the USA" and based on the premise that people must be free from poverty, exploitation, war and racism.

Socialism is the future we envision and advocate not only for our children, but for every man, woman and child in our country – to live full, productive and truly human lives in a safe, secure and healthy environment.

Defeat the Gingrich "Gang"

Our Number 1 priority must be to defeat the Gingrich "Gang" – every right-wing Republican in Congress – and prevent Bob Dole from getting into the White House. We have to find and support electable Democrats and independents who can defeat and replace the ultra-right Republicans.

That means we must build a massive, militant, united – Black, Brown, and white – people's movement, led by labor-community coalitions, that will have the power not only to shift the balance of forces in Washington, but to win new victories.

JOIN US

Are you tired of 'debates' about 'family values' that blame the victims?

Do you believe everyone has the right to a job at a livable wage?

Are you angry about the Gingrich-Dole "revolution" that's robbing our communities of human services while the rich get richer?

Do you see the need to get organized in order to save our cities?

Are you trying to make sense out of it all?

If your answer to these questions is "yes," then there is something you can do to make sense out of a system in crisis.

You can join the Communist Party, a party that has brought together working people of all races and nationalities for the good fight for more than 75 years, and is still going strong.

Join a Party on the move.
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